

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-01 INR-07
INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 OES-06 SP-02
SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 /091 W

-----111326Z 004415 /65

O 111245Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3178

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, ENRG, LI

SUBJECT: FIRE AT REFINERY OF LIBERIA REFINING CO. (LRC)

REF: STATE 8303

1. REFINERY OF LIBERIA REFINING COMPANY (67 PERCENT OWNED BY SUN OIL) HAS BEEN INOPERATIVE SINCE DECEMBER 25 WHEN FIRE CAUSED BY PIPES BURSTING IN HEATER DAMAGED CRUDE UNIT. AMERICAN MANAGER EPPARD INFORMED EMBASSY THAT REFINERY WILL BE SHUT DOWN FOR 3-4 MONTHS FOR REPAIR IF REFINERY GETS REPLACEMENT USED FURNACE COSTING ABOUT \$200,000 INSTALLED. A NEW FURNACE WOULD COST \$5000,000-6000,000 AND REQUIRE 10-12 MONTHS FOR MANUFACTURE, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION. TWO SMALL FIRES AT REFINERY EARLIER IN SAME MONTH WERE CAUSED BY CARELESSNESS. AT THAT TIME PARTS OF REFINERY WERE SHUT DOWN FOR FEW DAYS. DRAWDOWNS ON INVENTORY THEN PERMITTED REFINERY TO MEET LOCAL DEMAND FOR REFINED PRODUCTS. WHEN DECEMBER 25 FIRE STRUCK, LOW INVENTORY AT REFINERY, PARTICULARLY OF GASOLINE AND JET FUEL, CAUSED ALMOST IMMEDIATE SHORTAGES TO DEVELOP. CURRENTLY ONLY ASPHALT UNIT IS WORKING.

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2. LRC WITH ASSISTANCE OF LOCAL MARKETERS HAS SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING EMERGENCY IMPORTS OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS. GASOLINE CRISIS APPEARS TO BE OVER. FUEL OIL, HOWEVER, IS A CRITICAL ITEM. BONG AND LAMCO MAY HAVE TO SUSPEND IRON ORE MINING OPERATIONS WHEN THEY RUN OUT OF FUEL OIL IS EXPECTED ON JANUARY 14. A TANKER WITH LARGE LOAD OF FUEL OIL IS EXPECTED ON JANUARY 17. COUNTRY IS BARELY SCRAPING THROUGH

ON DIESEL OIL. CIVIL AIRCRAFT ARE BEING ADVISED TO REFUEL
ELSEWHERE.

3. NO REFINERY OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED. LRC MANAGER
MENTIONED THAT MINISTER OF COMMERCE DENNIS YESTERDAY THREAT-
ENED TO JAIL HIM AND OPERATIONS MANAGER PIERCY (BRITISH)
FOR INDUSTRIAL SABOTAGE.

4. COMMENT: UNFORTUNATELY SERIES OF FIRES AT REFINERY PRO-
VIDE WHAT TO SOME GOL OFFICIALS APPEAR TO BE CIRCUMSTANTIAL
EVIDENCE THAT SABOTAGE WAS INVOLVED. WE FEEL THAT MINISTER
DENNIS HAS NO INTENTION OF CARRYING OUT THREAT. WE BELIEVE
THAT HE WAS MERELY GOADING EPPARD AND PIERCY TO DO SOMETHING
TO SOLVE COUNTRY'S PETROLEUM CRISIS.
CARTER

NOTE BY OC/T: REF BELIEVED INCORRECT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Concepts: PETROLEUM PRODUCTION, EQUIPMENT, REFINERIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Litigation History:
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